



**STATE OF VERMONT
OFFICE OF THE STATE AUDITOR**

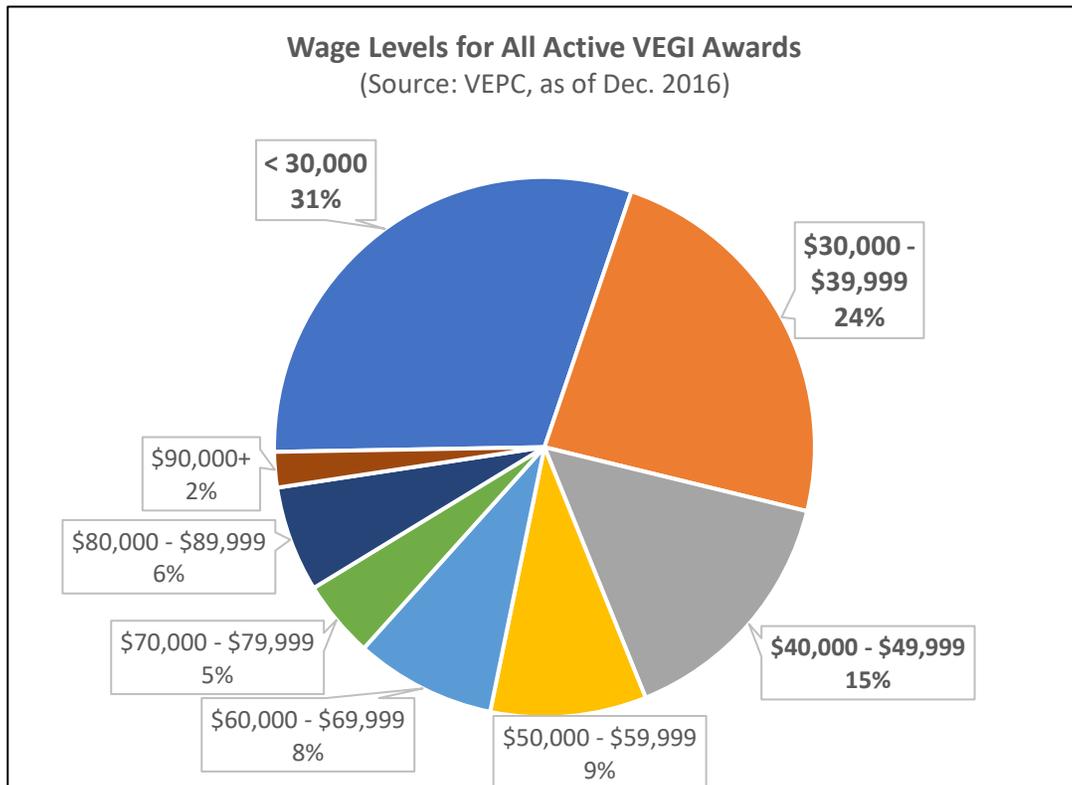
VEGI Wages

VEPC's annual report on VEGI contains a lot of information, but there are some noteworthy omissions. VEPC reports the average wage of new hires, but that masks the distribution of wages. A lot of new qualifying employees make considerably less than the average reported for all VEGI recipients. That was always the case, but the legislature's decision to reduce the threshold wage for some areas has contributed to the problem.

VEGI applicants are required to pay new qualifying employees at least 160% of the current minimum wage, unless they are in areas with lower-than-average wages or higher than average unemployment. In those areas, the threshold is reduced to 140% of the minimum wage.¹

[Previous annual reports](#) provided information on the range of wages paid by VEGI-authorized firms. But more recent reports (2018 forward) present only the average wage, which hides the extent to which many VEGI-authorized jobs are comparatively low wage.

In 2016 (last year these data were provided), VEPC reported that the average wage for all active and completed awards was \$56,801. But 30% of those jobs paid less than \$30,000 and over 70% earned less than the average. **I encourage you to ask VEPC to provide wage data by range, not just averages.**



¹ [32 V.S.A. § 3331](#)